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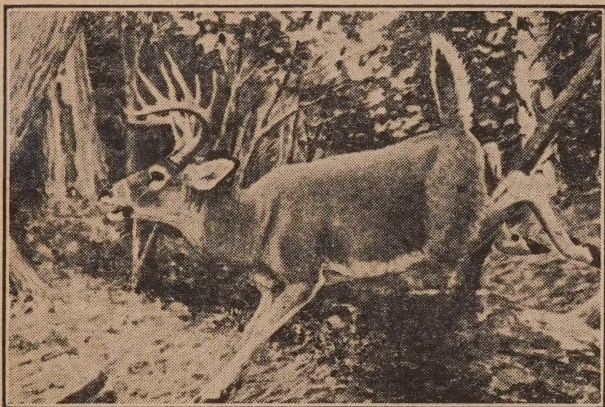
Government  
Publications



ONTARIO

# Monthly Bulletin

DEPARTMENT OF  
GAME AND FISHERIES



THE VIRGINIA DEER

HON. G. H. DUNBAR  
*Minister*

D. J. TAYLOR  
*Deputy Minister*





### A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

The success of any law depends, in large measure, upon the public support it receives. The Game and Fisheries Act, under which the Wild Life Resources of the Province are administered, is no exception. It is an insurance against unnecessary waste and provides for a sane and equitable use of a public heritage.

In arranging for the re-issuing of the Department's Monthly Bulletin, it is my hope that it may be the means of arousing interest in the conservational work of the Department and securing a maximum of public co-operation.

G. H. DUNBAR.



# DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISHERIES

TORONTO - ONTARIO

HON. G. H. DUNBAR, *Provincial Secretary*  
*Minister in charge of Department*

D. J. TAYLOR, *Deputy Minister*

Published to stimulate interest in the conservation of the Wild Life Natural  
Resources of the Province of Ontario

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## Foreword

ALMOST four years ago publication of the Bulletin was suspended for reasons of national economy arising out of the war effort, and embracing both a paper and labour shortage. During the previous five years it had developed from a mimeographed publication of ten pages, with a monthly mailing list of some 600 names, to a more or less pretentious printed booklet of sixteen pages having a circulation of about 2,000. It was mailed to every newspaper in the province, as well as to the executives and many members of The Game and Fish Protective Associations, and a miscellaneous list which included school libraries, teachers and hundreds of private individuals who had requested copies. Its exchange service included many of the States in the Union, and in addition it found its way to readers in South Africa and Scotland.

The Bulletin was first conceived by the Deputy Minister, Mr. D. J. Taylor, as a means of supplying information on departmental affairs in an interesting form, that might be readily distributed to the public as publicity material at the Canadian National Exhibition. The reaction of the public was so favourable it was decided to make it a permanent feature of the Department's conservation programme. While the Bulletin was not in circulation when the present minister The Honourable G. H. Dunbar took over administrative control of the Department, he quickly recognized its value, and made plans for reintroducing it as soon as conditions permitted.

Its primary function, as stated in its permanent heading, was "to stimulate interest in the conservation of the Wild Life Natural Resources of the Province." It had other functions, however, which were of equal importance. It furnished the sportsman with information concerning the administrative work of the Department, and, we believe this feature was of much assistance to the executives and members of the various Protective Associations. From this information the sportsmen were enabled to discuss the policies of the Department, and this frequently resulted in closer co-operation, even if, as occasionally happened, such co-operation was fostered through constructive criticism.

During its years of circulation it covered in brief form the life history, in so far as such information was available, of most of the game fishes, game birds and mammals of the Province. It made no attempt to enter the field of romance and adventure, so popular in our national sporting magazines, but occasionally its pages were enlivened by human interest stories of the big ones which did, or did not get away. Its editorials were inspired by a burning desire to achieve its preconceived aims — conservation through co-operation. In short, it strove to point the way to better hunting and fishing through emphasizing the ethics of sportsmanship.

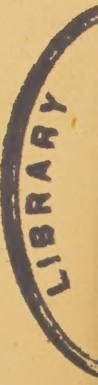
The measure of the success of the Bulletin was manifest in the many kindly letters received by the Department when its temporary withdrawal was announced, and in recent requests that its publication be resumed.

Now that peace has been restored to a war-weary world, certain difficulties of publication have been removed, and it is felt that the time is ripe for re-introducing the Bulletin. With this number, therefore, we again make our bow to the sportsman of the Province, and hope that the seeds of our endeavour will fall on fertile soil, and result in an even larger measure of co-operation in developing, protecting and perpetuating the wild life of the Province.

In the post-war schemes which are being planned to take care of rehabilitation and reconstruction, the Department of Game and Fisheries will play its part. The tentative plans call for an enlarged administrative programme embracing all phases of wild-life development. Appointments to the service made necessary by these extended plans will be entirely reserved for returned men. However, it is realized that demobilization will not be complete for some time yet, and that many men still overseas are desirous of the type of work the Department has to offer; therefore, full-scale expansion will be effected gradually to meet the situation. It is also pointed out that as building material and skilled labour are very difficult to obtain at present, construction work may be delayed. The enforcement, or field staff, has already been increased by fifteen to twenty per cent., and new officers will continue to be appointed until the necessary quota for complete and satisfactory enforcement of the regulations has been obtained. Unfortunately there is a dearth of applications from men with biological training suitable for fish culture and other work of a technical and scientific nature. It may be necessary, therefore, to make seasonal use of a number of the men who will be taking rehabilitation courses along these lines.

In addition to the usual articles of general information, it is proposed to publish in the Bulletin a short history of the Department showing the development of wild-life conservation over a period of fifty years or more. Extracts will appear regularly to the extent that space will permit.

It is our hope that the Bulletin will serve as a means of contact between the Department and the sportsmen of the Province, and that it will prove interesting as well as informative, even as it continues to emphasize the need for co-operation and sound conservational practices in the use of a valuable heritage.





## We Carry On

Since the Bulletin was last published the gamut of human experience has ranged through every phase of physical and mental suffering. We had our Dunkirks, our Tobruks and our Singapores, when the clouds of adversity were black and threatening, but there were rainbows in the skies over El Alamein, Sicily, Italy and Normandy, and finally the "pot of gold" amidst the rubble of Berlin, and the eclipse of the "Rising Sun" over Tokyo.

During that cycle of hope and adversity, the resources and manpower of the Nation were fully employed in the war effort and all else became of secondary importance. Depleted staffs were the order of the day in all but essential industries, and so it became necessary to "carry on" by sharing one another's burdens, so to speak.

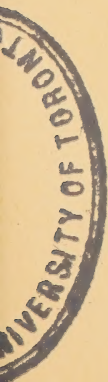
The initiative of the Department was taxed to maintain the many phases of its administrative programme. Yet, surprising as it may seem, it was found possible to maintain all normal activities, and there was little let-up in the extent or magnitude of well-established conservational practices.

Details of the various activities carried on during the past few years will be given from time to time in the Bulletin. In the meantime it is of interest to note that fish culture and restocking operations were carried on as fully and completely as in normal times. Fish plantings for the pre-war year of 1938 amounted to 733,265,643. The average for the next five years was 763,596,150.

Restocking of pheasants was also carried on during the period, and while this phase of the work was greatly handicapped through lack of labour, yet a substantial distribution of adult birds was made each year in the Regulated Townships. This permitted a short open season to be held annually, and despite the freezing of ammunition, few sportsmen interested in upland game shooting were unable to beg, borrow or otherwise secure shells enough to enable them to participate. The general pheasant situation is discussed in a subsequent article.

While the protective force suffered a number of losses through enlistment, these were in many cases filled by temporary appointments. The work of this branch of the service was effectively maintained, a fact which is reflected in the annual return of convictions for breach of the laws, and the income from yearly sales of confiscated equipment, raw furs, etc. During the fiscal year 1941-1942 departmental revenue from all sources was the largest recorded in any one year in the entire existence of the Department, reaching the total of \$1,183,269.29. This is \$168,000 in excess of the next best year, which was 1939-40.

It was thought that during the war years there would be a large drop in the numbers of non-resident anglers. This it was felt would be bad for departmental revenue, but from the standpoint of conservation would



serve a useful purpose. Less intensive fishing is one way of saving the resources, for when fewer fish are taken natural reproduction is increased. This factor has not been realized to any appreciable extent in so far as non-resident anglers are concerned. As previously noted, revenue from non-resident licenses for the first two years of the war was the greatest in the history of the Department up to that time, and it has been maintained at a comparatively high level since. As showing the trend, it is noted that during the present year, and well in advance of complete demobilization, the revenue from this source has increased approximately fifty per cent. over the preceding year. Resident anglers are not required to purchase a license, so we are unable to offer a comparison, but it is reasonable to assume that the trend was much the same as in the case of non-resident anglers. All of which is by way of saying that the economic value of our wild-life assets has been maintained and their popular appeal intensified.

## The Propagation of the Pheasant in Ontario

The English Ringneck Pheasant — that exotic and glamorous upland game bird — has for several years been holding the spotlight in the arena of early fall sporting activities. After many years of both natural and artificial reproduction it is now firmly established in areas where climatic conditions are not too severe.

How and when the pheasant was introduced to the Province is a matter of conjecture. Early official records are not very precise or over communicative in referring to the Ringneck. The first reference we have been able to discover is contained in a report of the Ontario Game and Fish Commissioners for the year 1895, and is as follows:

"There is an increasing feeling among sportsmen that further and greater efforts must be made in the near future looking towards the re-stocking of game covers. Some ardent sportsmen have introduced the Mongolian Pheasant and also the English Pheasant, but sufficient time has not yet elapsed in which to test the success of the experiment."

In 1896 the Commissioners report: "A number of English Pheasants, about one hundred and twenty, were reared at Rondeau during the last year, which is very well for the first season."

Apparently, therefore, the pheasant was being propagated and released in the province half a century ago, which was prior to the time when wild life administration was placed under the present Department of Game and Fisheries.

Its development during the next two decades, however, was more or less spasmodic, at least there is no record of any particular improvement in the situation. By 1919 there were favourable reports of increasing numbers in the Niagara Peninsula. During this year also the Department undertook to assist in the propagation of the birds by purchasing some new stock and placing them in Rondeau Park. A quantity of eggs was also imported during the spring months, and the hatch duly distributed.



From 1920 to 1924 there appears to have been very little change in the general situation except that ever increasing numbers were reported from the Niagara Peninsula. During the latter year the Counties of Lincoln and Welland were given a one-day open season on cock birds only.

In 1922 the Department began an intensive programme of propagation through a more or less general distribution of eggs from the Bird Farm at Eugenia. These eggs were shipped to interested farmers and sportsmen who had undertaken to hatch the eggs and release the birds when they



ADULT PHEASANTS

were capable of taking care of themselves. This work was gradually developed until in 1927 some 26,280 eggs were distributed in addition to 981 live birds. During the five-year period, 1927 to 1931, some 85,275 eggs were distributed to private individuals for hatching and in addition 5,443 live birds were released in suitable areas.

In 1932 the work of pheasant propagation was transferred from Eugenia to newly acquired Government property at Codrington in North-



umberland County. Here the facilities were more extensive than at Eugenia and it was found possible to carry on the work more intensively. During this year some 17,835 eggs were shipped out and 1,055 live birds hatched under hens, and liberated in due course.

Reports to the Department at this time showed that the birds were on the increase in southern and southwestern counties, so much so that a limited open season was proclaimed in the Counties of Essex, Lincoln, Welland, Wentworth, Halton, Peel, Durham and Northumberland.

The distribution of eggs and the releasing of live birds continued in ever-increasing volume during the next five years, while the counties adjacent to Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, which had proved themselves suitable for this non-native species, continued to report increasing numbers of birds.

It was felt, however, that the long-established policy of distributing eggs and depending upon private individuals to raise the birds was outmoded and unprofitable. Pheasants require a little more care than chicks because of their "wild" instinct and the fact that in this case they were being raised by a foster mother — usually a bantam hen or any other domestically inclined substitute. In many cases, too, the responsible individual, no matter how well intentioned he may have been, just simply hadn't the time to look after them properly, or provide that extra bit of care their welfare called for. As a result the mortality rate was frequently quite high and propagation suffered accordingly.

During the fiscal year 1937-38, a new policy was inaugurated. Suitable electrical equipment was obtained, brooder houses were constructed and mass production of birds by artificial means was begun. Only 4,545 eggs were distributed that year while some 5,076 ten-weeks old birds were liberated.

In addition to the farm at Codrington, arrangements were made to begin production on the Government farm at Normandale, where facilities were equally good.

With the operation of these two farms production was stepped up considerably and during the ensuing five years to 1943, an average of over 22,130 live birds, pre-ranged, and at least ten weeks old, were distributed annually. Labour shortage prevented the operation of the Normandale Farm and seriously curtailed production at Codrington in 1944, so that distribution dropped to 7,404. Because of improved conditions, the number of pheasants released during the present year will be much above the average.

Such in brief is the history of the propagation and distribution of the Ringneck Pheasant in Ontario. The measure of the success of the experiment has not been fully ascertained. Since the Department undertook the responsibility of raising, or purchasing, live birds for distribution, and placing these in Regulated Township areas, development has been such as to warrant short open seasons annually in all of these localities, in addition to the Counties of Essex and Kent. In some of the areas the



birds are quite plentiful, and have provided excellent sport. In others — which are probably not so well suited in the matter of climate and habitat — results have not been so favourable.

The matter of climate appears to be an important factor in the establishment and development of the pheasant. During severe winters, when ice and snow have covered the weeds and berry bushes, it finds difficulty in obtaining food. It is capable of surviving the cold provided it can secure food, but if it is weakened through starvation it will probably not survive. Large numbers of pheasants are frequently to be seen around the farms during winter months, where they appear to be able to pick up enough grain and other foodstuffs to supply their wants. Frequently the Department finds it necessary, with the co-operation of the sportsmen's associations and interested individuals, to supply food in areas where conditions are severe and natural food scarce.

Other factors, of course, play their part in the abundance or scarcity of the birds. Environment, natural enemies, and the illegal activities of the poacher make life difficult for the pheasant. All of these conditions must be taken into account when appraising the present situation.

As a means of obtaining some idea as to how many of the birds distributed by the Department each year as poults survive to become the prey of the sportsman, each cock bird released this season has been banded with an aluminum band bearing the inscription "Dept. G. & F., 1945." The sportsman will be asked to co-operate by advising the Department how many birds he obtained during the open season and, of the total number, how many were banded. A compilation of the answers will give some idea as to whether the present system of stocking is successful, or if it is desirable to experiment along new lines. These might take the form of supplying eggs or day-old chicks to responsible sportsmen's associations whose members would undertake to raise the birds to maturity and release them in their own territory. This is common practice in many of the States, and is the basis of a scheme now in operation, whereby sportsmen in Lincoln County hope to raise thousands of birds each year with which to stock their own County.

It is important, however, in whatever scheme is planned or undertaken, to have the co-operation of the sportsmen. The coverts which contain the most birds are those which are most suitable and receive the greatest protection; the birds which best survive the winter are those which can obtain food or for which it is provided; the most successful sportsman is the man who is enthusiastic about his sport and is prepared to co-operate in the protection and development of the resources which make it possible.

## Law Enforcement

The proper enforcement of the conservation laws designed to protect, develop and perpetuate all forms of wild life is dependant upon the degree of public support which these laws inspire. This support will be best



attained when the public is educated to realize the importance of wild life as a part of the national economy, and its value as a recreational medium. There must be a deep sense of the necessity for individual responsibility in the protection of this valuable heritage, a clear understanding of the underlying principles upon which the laws are based and a willingness to co-operate with the enforcement officers in minimizing law infractions. Co-operation by the citizens of the Province to the extent indicated would lighten the work of administration, stabilize control, assist in development and ensure perpetuation.

These remarks apply in a general way to the whole of our citizenry, but have a particular significance for the sportsman. The resources which provide the incentive for his sport, and contribute to his pleasure in attainment, are a common heritage received in trust and to be handed down as a bequest to future generations. To understand the value of this inheritance should be the obligation of every one who exercises his right to use the resources for pleasure or material profit. The equity of each is limited, but if wisely used the complete inheritance is capable of providing a perpetual annuity of great economic value and recreational pleasure.

The protective measures provided by legislation are intended to afford a maximum of use while at the same time securing the resources against extermination through illegal or unwarranted use. These measures will only be effective in attaining their objective if the sportsman assumes his responsibility in the matter, faithfully observes the regulations, and co-operates to the fullest extent with the Department in seeing that the resources are not sabotaged by those having no regard for the ethics of sportsmanship.

This matter of co-operation in law observance is essential to good hunting and fishing, and to the proper enjoyment of the twin sports. It is the basis upon which the success of all laws is founded, but in the case of the Game and Fisheries Laws it is an assurance that the personal equity will not be impaired through lack of control.

The field officers are conscientious in carrying out their duties, but because of physical limitations and geographical difficulties they are not able of themselves to plug every leak in the conservation programme, or stop all of the petty pilfering which in its cumulative effect might easily have disastrous consequences, especially when added to the toll taken by the deliberate lawbreaker. They cover a wide territory in the performance of their duties, and as a consequence are unable to place a restraining hand on every violator, much as they would desire to do so. For much of their success they must depend upon the co-operation of those whose sense of sportsmanship is strong enough to resent the activities of the poacher and petty lawbreaker, and who by their own efforts or by giving him the necessary information, make it possible to curb these illegal tendencies.

In this regard the sportsman should remember that illegal taking is not just a matter of breaking the law, however petty the offence may seem. It is a direct sabotage of a public heritage which if persisted in



mightily easily result in so dissipating the resources as to put an end to his sport. If there were no restrictions that situation would soon develop; a general lack of respect for those there are could bring about the same results. This fact is so elementary as to require no elaboration.

Law enforcement is, of course, the primary duty of the field officers. They are the front line troops battling the enemy, but they require the usual information and intelligence reports if they are to be successful in the fight. That information must be accurate and up-to-date, based if possible on personal reconnaissance and not on surmise or hearsay. It should be the responsibility of every sportsman to see that such information is communicated to the proper officers, so that losses through illegal taking may be reduced to a minimum.

The work of the enforcement officers is not easy, and at times it is far from pleasant, but it is carried on without vindictiveness and with a degree of courtesy which is always appreciated. The public can add to the efficiency of the service through reporting flagrant irregularities to the officers or to the Department, and through precedent and example help to prevent minor infractions, and develop a deeper respect for the laws involved.

## Foxes Are Plentiful

The development of wild life in the realm of Nature involves many complex problems, upon some of which we still lack definite scientific data. One of these is the inter-relationship which exists between the different species. What precise effect has the life of one upon the growth and development of another? It would seem that when any species of game shows an increase in numbers the predators which prey upon it also increase, and when a species becomes scarce its enemies also appear to become less numerous.

A few years ago foxes were comparatively scarce in Southern Ontario, particularly in the southwestern districts. Most of the pelts procured by trappers came from Northern Ontario, where the wide open spaces provide a natural environment. For several years, however, foxes have been increasing in numbers in areas, where but a few years ago none were to be found. It is reasonable to assume that this increase in the fox population coincides with an increase in the natural food supply upon which the fox preys.

Here it should be stated that during the past decade or so, the propagation of the English Ringneck Pheasant and its establishment over an extensive area have been prominent features in the Department's restocking programme. Provision has been made for the protection of these birds in specified townships. As a result of natural reproduction and the annual release of thousands of artificially raised birds in these regulated townships, pheasants have become quite plentiful.



Following the natural law, this augmented food supply has attracted the attention of a great many predators, of which the fox is alleged to be the most formidable. For several years it, too, has been increasing in numbers, within the areas allotted to pheasants, becoming bolder as its needs expanded. It has not confined its sniping to wild life, but in many quarters has been accused of extensive pilfering of domestic stock.

Two years ago it became necessary to suspend most of the regulations with regard to the taking of foxes in many sections of southwestern Ontario. This rather radical step was taken in order to provide some measure of protection to farmers raising poultry, turkeys, etc. Foxes had become so numerous, especially in the Regulated Areas, that their depredations were causing alarm to the farmer, and the sportsman was loudly declaiming that pheasants were being destroyed in large numbers by this crafty predator.

While it is believed that the decline or abundance of the fox population is governed by the natural cycle of the rodents, and small game upon which it feeds, and to this extent would show a fluctuation in numbers, it is interesting to note that the red fox pelts upon which royalty was paid jumped from 15,059 in 1941 to 53,205 in 1944, an increase of over 250 per cent.

It is noted, however, that the increase in foxes is not something peculiar to Ontario. Many of the neighbouring States and several of the adjoining Provinces, including Quebec and Manitoba, also report foxes as being plentiful. It would, therefore, be unwise to assume that the pheasant is wholly responsible for the present increase in foxes in these regulated areas, just as it would be foolish to pretend that where pheasants show an apparent decrease in numbers that decline can be attributed to foxes. That the matter is a live and controversial one throughout the eastern States is shown by the following quotations from Audubon Magazine.

"The furore over foxes, the arguing over whether or not to put a bounty on them, and the attributing to them of almost every shortage of upland game birds proceeds apace throughout much of the eastern part of the nation. In evidence thereof, a recent news item tells us that the New Jersey Fish and Game Commission includes in its programme the hiring of professional hunters and trappers to devote their entire time to destroying foxes, weasels, skunks and other animals considered harmful to game. It adds that the Commission maintains that the present number of predators dooms any stocking program to failure."

"It is, therefore, particularly pleasing to note that at a recent meeting of the New York State Conservation Council, representing a group of fish and game clubs and sportsmen's associations, the speakers on a special panel to discuss this topic concluded that fox bounties are an expensive and ineffective pheasant conservation measure."

"They stressed their belief that abundance of foxes is not responsible for the present pheasant shortage in New York State; that bounty laws, no matter how carefully drawn, open the way to fraud through use of animals taken in one area to collect bounties in another, and that a major part of the bounty appropriations is often absorbed by animals that would have been taken anyhow. While this reasoning does not explain why the fox abundance is not responsible for the pheasant shortage—reasoning that would be helpful to thinking as to why abundance of predators is not responsible for shortages of game birds or animals on which they prey—the action taken by the Council demonstrates that the members of the sportsmen's organization were willing to face and consider the facts, unruffled by the prevailing hysteria."

As we said at the beginning, it is one of the problems concerning which more definite information is desirable. There probably are many valid reasons for any decrease in the numbers of pheasants in any area, but the fox is without doubt a contributing factor. It is hoped the hunters and trappers will be able to exercise the necessary control.

## Lost Dogs

An aftermath of each deer hunting season, and one which is very annoying to those most concerned, is the number of dogs which are lost during the chase. We speak from sad experience, because it was our misfortune during the past season to have the two dogs with our party fail to return to the camp on the second day of the hunt, and we were without their services during the remainder of the period. As a matter of fact, only one of them has as yet been recovered, and that, after the party had returned home. The disappearance of both dogs at such an early stage in the hunt was a double blow, because the territory we were covering was too tough for still hunting, and besides both had been borrowed for the occasion, and we dreaded the responsibility of advising the owner that both his pets were missing. The moral is, don't borrow dogs for your hunting trip, it may turn out embarrassing. The bureau of missing dogs has many such unsolved cases on its books, and there are few sportsmen who have not had some experience with this problem.

There are many factors which contribute to the disappearance of dogs on the trail of a deer. One of these is the extensive territory which is sometimes covered by a zealous but frequently untrained dog. Such a dog will follow a scent all day, travelling long distances, and circling back and forward, and at the end of the day find itself miles from its own camp, tired and near exhaustion from its efforts. As frequently happens, he has stumbled across another camp of hunters and the members of this party seeing his condition, feed him and try to make him comfortable for the night. That is as it should be, but the question of ethics now arises. It must be obvious to those concerned that the dog belongs to a nearby camp and that every effort should be made to return him to his owners. There is seldom any thought of retaining the dog, but frequently it is



decided to hold him until his owner can be discovered. In the meantime, why not use him on their own runways? Next day the dog is introduced to new trails, and the probability is he will stick around his new home for the balance of the hunt. The point is that if turned loose, instead of being conducted to new territory, he might have found his way back to his own camp. Such a feat is not difficult for a dog.

Accidents are also contributing factors in the disappearance of dogs, but these are less frequent than might be imagined. There are few dogs used in hunting which look like a creature of the wild—a police dog might readily be taken for a wolf, but the use of such dogs is prohibited. There would, therefore, be little excuse for the accidental shooting of a dog in mistake for something else.

The proper identification of lost dogs is another source of trouble when it comes to claiming ownership. The usual descriptions of age, size, kind, colour and sex should be sufficient, but it frequently happens that these are not known with enough clarity to establish positive identity, and occasionally dogs look enough alike to cause confusion.

At a Fish and Game Protective Association meeting recently this matter came up for discussion, and it was suggested that uncertainty would be eliminated if sportsmen who value their dogs—and most of them do—would have one of the dog's ears tattooed with a suitable mark, as for example, the initials of the owner. This expedient is carried out in the case of most registered live stock, and with the proper equipment is a simple operation.

Another excellent means of identification is a good photo, and this simple precaution should not be overlooked.

## The World of Nature

The world of man faces disaster, but Nature retains her perennial calm. Her laws are eternal and unchangeable. They follow a well-conceived plan which man can neither change nor disregard. The sun shines and the moon reflects its glory. The earth rotates with incredible speed and day follows night with dramatic regularity. Sunrise and sunset have been calculated with mathematical accuracy, and the ebb and flow of the tides is an open book, because the fundamental laws never vary. It is well for man that these controlling influences are outside the scope of his experiments, and that, however much he may destroy his own heritage, the Universe, like old man river, "keeps on rolling along" to fulfil the plan of the Great Creator.

The world of Nature has not gone to war, although Nature's creatures live by the law of conquest. Despite this background, it is a peaceful world—the realm of the great outdoors. In Spring all Nature awakens from the long Winter slumber. The rain falls and provides moisture; the sun shines to warm the soil, and soon the trees, shrubs and flowers are budding,

leafing and flowering, garlanding the earth in a fairyland of new beauty. With the same warm breath of Spring, the snow melts, the ice disappears and quiet streams become raging torrents, symbolic of life — vital, vibrant and vociferous.

This spirit of rejuvenation is universal. Hibernating creatures awake to a new dawn; migratory birds return from their winter sojourn in the south; aquatic life, no longer dormant by reason of icy barriers, bestirs itself with new vigour; and everywhere there is a spirit of romance and adventure.

Each season in the out-of-doors has its own particular charm. Spring is creative, Summer restful, Autumn active and colourful, Winter enchanting and invigorating. For those who have "ears to hear and eyes to see" each phase provides a different experience, yet the effect is always one of peace, with a deep feeling of respect for the forces involved.

The sportsman is particularly fortunate in that his recreation takes him into this environment, and offers him temporary release from the physical and mental strain which is the price exacted for the pace of modern civilization. The artificiality of much of our modern city life pays no dividends either in health or mental outlook. The canyons of business are a perpetual "midway" of noise and bustle, and the atmosphere is heavy with the smoke and grime of industrial activities.

The environment of field and stream on the other hand, is clean and wholesome. There is seldom any undue activity among the creatures of the wild — except when they are disturbed by natural enemies — and the tempo of life is subdued. There are no blaring horns, clanking bells or noisy radios; instead there is the music of the rippling stream; the crescendo of turbulent waters; the symphony of the song birds; the rhythmic tapping of the woodpecker; the excited chatter of the squirrel; and the sighing of the wind in the trees. There are no trappings or artificialities, but there are colour schemes few artists can match. There is the blue of the sky reflected in crystal clear waters; the greens, browns, reds, and yellows which blend in fascinating harmony, and at eventide there are sunsets of gold to illumine the horizon.

No, the world of Nature has not gone to war, although it supplies much of the material with which wars are fought. It remains a symbol of that free and untrammelled existence to which man aspires, but has never attained because of his own inane greed and selfishness. Let us keep its laws inviolate and protect the resources by refraining from extravagant or unwise use, remembering that in the great outdoors are to be found those desirable qualities which make for health, happiness and good citizenship.

## Sale of Confiscated Firearms

Room B511, which is the official designation of the Department's vault, disgorged from the inner recesses of its many steel lockers and put



on display during the first three days of October, a miscellaneous collection of rifles, shotguns and steel traps. The occasion was the annual sale of confiscated firearms, and there was a constant stream of men milling around during the better part of each of the three days. Not all of these were prospective buyers; some were merely there out of curiosity, while others were present to offer advice and counsel to friends who were perhaps less experienced in the mysteries of calibre, range, and general effectiveness of the various weapons.

Having decided that a certain gun will just about fill his requirements the prospective buyer is required to make a bid for it in the form of a sealed tender. This is the rock upon which many hopes and anticipations are dashed. If the tenderer has been generous in his estimate of the value of the gun to himself, and his bid tops the list, the gun is his. If, on the other hand, he vacillates between his anxiety to secure the gun and his intuition that this is an opportunity to pick up something he wants at a bargain price, he will probably be disappointed. The value of an article — necessary and desirable — is not to be measured entirely in terms of purchase and sale, but rather in its ability to satisfy immediate and personal requirements. In other words, for every tenderer who wants a bargain, there's another who wants the gun and competition seldom lags! This has been particularly true during the war years when new guns were completely off the market.

On the occasion of the latest sale there was a firearm to suit all tastes, at least there was variety a-plenty. Twenty-two's held the spotlight, if only by reason of their numbers, but there were rifles of all calibres, automatic and bolt action, double and single barrel shotguns — pumps and automatics. The twenty-two's were a motley collection ranging from one which looked like a toy — through the whole scale of youthful indulgences — to the more pretentious magazine and automatic types. The high-powered group included a German military rifle of last war vintage dated 1914 and manufactured in Berlin.

The annual sales of confiscated firearms and fishing tackle are a sad reflection on the sporting ethics of hundreds of anglers and hunters and a barometer of the activities of the field officers. The latter are vigilant in carrying out their duties and the deliberate lawbreakers need expect no sympathy. The regulations are fairly well known to most sportsmen, but for the benefit of those who are inclined to "take a chance" we quote the section covering this phase of protective work. Sec. 69-1:

"All motor vehicles, aeroplanes, guns, ammunition, boats, skiffs, canoes, punts, and vessels of every description, decoys, nets, rods, lines, tackle and all appliances of every kind used for hunting and fishing, and all game and fish, together with packages, crates or containers of every description found in the possession of any person deemed to have committed an offence against this Act or the regulations shall be seized, and upon conviction be forfeited and become the property of His Majesty in the custody of the Department, to be sold, provided,

however, that where a seizure has been made from an unknown party, or where no legal action has been taken regarding any seizure where a violation of this Act or the regulations has occurred, the Department may sell any article seized."

It will be seen that the power of seizure is wide and that taking a chance may be a costly business. During the fiscal year 1943-1944 there were 1,201 cases in which seizures of all kinds were made, and the sale of these brought revenue to the Department amounting to \$27,087.41. The Department can make effective use of this revenue, but it would prefer to know that respect for the laws was universal, and that revenue from this source was a precarious part of the annual budget. However, just as long as the deliberate lawbreaker and the petty pilferer persist in ignoring the rules of the game and the rights of others there will continue to be periodical sales of confiscated firearms.

## The Ancient Art of Fly Fishing

Those of us who have not delved too deeply into the historical background of fly fishing as practised to-day, are apt to conclude that it is more or less modern in concept and practice. As a matter of fact fly fishing is of very ancient origin according to the following interesting record taken from one of our exchange publications.

"I have heard of a Macedonian way of catching fish and it is this. Between Boraca and Thessalonica runs a river called the Astracus, and in it there are fish with spotted (or speckled) skins, what the natives of the country call them you had better ask the Macedonians.

"They have planned a snare for these fish and get the better of them by their fisherman's craft. They fasten red wool around the hook and fit onto the wool two feathers which grow under a cock's wattles . . .

"Those words were written by Aclian three centuries before Christ. They describe the first known trout fly. They show how incredibly old is this recreational activity which we call angling."—(Texas Game and Fish.)

## We Salute You!

The Bulletin takes the opportunity in this its first post-war issue to pay tribute to the members of the armed and auxiliary services who are returning home after a job well done. Words are somewhat inadequate, but we extend our grateful thanks and assure you of a cordial "Welcome Home." Your fighting qualities are inherent and were never in doubt; your courage and valour were superb; while your initiative and resource in dangerous and difficult situations were unsurpassed. You have worthily upheld the traditions of your fathers, and brought new lustre to the Nation. We salute you!

The sportsmen of the Province have not been unmindful of your interest in fishing and hunting and during your absence have co-operated with the Department to protect the wild-life resources which make these



sports possible. The Department has continued to carry on its long-term policy of conservation with a minimum of interruption, despite labour shortage and other war-time difficulties. We believe you will discover that your favourite fishing waters are just as well stocked as when you left us, and game in forest and field equally plentiful.

We invite you to resume your sporting activities once more and in the peaceful surroundings of the out-of-doors forget the experiences of the past few years. You will find a greater thrill in casting a line than you ever did in throwing a bomb, and the explosive leap of a fighting bass will provide as much excitement as the detonation of a well-placed mortar shell; while the vision of a majestic buck flashing across your horizon, as you swing your favourite rifle once more to your shoulder, will raise your blood pressure just as quickly as did the sight of an enemy patrol sneaking across the mud of no man's land. The difference is mental, with the element of fear eliminated. Yes, war experiences are exciting; they are also exacting. They take a heavy toll in physical and mental suffering. The sporting activities of the great out-of-doors are equally thrilling, but their effect is definitely relaxing. The surroundings are wholesome, and as a result the outdoor experience is refreshing and invigorating to body and mind. It is from this standpoint that we invite you to add fishing and hunting to your post-war plans for personal rehabilitation.

## The Great Clock.

The clock of life is wound but once,  
And no man has the power  
To tell just when the hand will stop,  
At late or early hour.

Now is the only time you own;  
Live, love, toil with a will,  
Plan no faith in to-morrow for  
The clock may then be still.

Wear to-day a cheerful face  
In everything you do,  
The sunshine that you radiate  
Will shine right back to you.

Speak to-day a word of hope  
To someone in distress;  
When you lift another's load  
You make your burdens less.

Do to-day a gracious deed  
And do it with a smile;  
It's little daily acts like these  
That make your life worth while.

(Pennsylvania Game News.)







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